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ENERGY POLICY FOR A NEW DIRECTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, for too long this Nation has been held hostage and has been dependent upon Middle East oil. For too long this Nation has been held hostage and been dependent on the automakers of this country in terms of determining whether kind of transportation we will have in the United States.

Today, just an hour or an hour and a half ago, this House voted overwhelmingly and on a bipartisan basis to break that dependency and to become free again, to become free of Middle East oil, to become free of the automakers who have prevented us from having more efficient automobiles, getting better miles per gallon, and greener, to save our environment.

By that vote, this House spoke for the independence of this country. By that vote, this House spoke for the American people who have been demanding from us now for many years to have automobiles that were more efficient, less polluting, that serve their needs. For many years, they have told us that they have been worried about our national security, about our foreign policy, when we are driven to decisions based upon the dependency of Middle East oil, based upon the dependency of foreign oil, based on the dependency of not having our own energy house in order so we can make those decisions.

When they have seen time and again American lives and treasure lost to secure sources of oil, they have asked for a new direction. They have asked for a new day in American energy policy. Just a couple of hours ago, the House of Representatives delivered to the American people that new energy policy and that new direction. It's a policy that is based in the future, it's a policy that is based in American ingenuity, talent and skills. It's a policy that is based in innovation and discovery, the things that America has been great at since this country was founded, that real talent and the strengths of this Nation being pulled together for the new technologies of wind energy, of biotech energy, of ethanol, and the other alternative fuels that are available, to the alternative sources of electricity, whether it's wave energy, solar energy. That is what America does best. We have wasted 8 years while we have refused to embrace the future.

This bill over the next few years will generate 3 million jobs in every geographic sector of this Nation as utilities seek out alternative energy sources for the generation of electricity. That means the people will be going to work in solar facilities, people will be going to work in wind facilities,

people will be going to work in biofuel facilities, in ethanol facilities, in all kind of new technologies, new production, new manufacturing, the next generation of manufacturing, the next generation of innovation.

When we were working on our Innovation Agenda, which this Congress passed a couple of months ago and was sent to the President, passed overwhelmingly on a bipartisan vote, signed by the President of the United States, when we were working on that Innovation Agenda with the leaders in biotech, in high-tech, in the venture capital community, people who are betting real money on the future of this country, they told us to give them a new energy policy that would drive a next generation of technology in the computer industry, in the telecommunications industry, in the biotech industry; that would drive the next generation of investment in energy and in the future of this country; that would drive the next generation of discovery and innovation.

Today, the House of Representatives delivered that energy policy to the American companies so they can go to work in discovery and innovation and creating jobs here in America in the new industries surrounding the new energy future and the new energy policy.

I am very, very proud this day to be a Member of the House of Representatives, casting this vote for a new energy future for America.

TRAGEDY AT THE WESTROADS MALL IN OMAHA, NEBRASKA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. TERRY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great sadness, for yesterday, at about 2 p.m., a tragedy occurred in my hometown, where eight people were killed, gunned down, some of them employees at Von Maur, others just shopping for the Christmas holidays. To those families, those eight families who lost a loved one so senselessly, my thoughts and my prayers go out to you. I can't imagine what you're going through today.

Our whole community across Nebraska, eastern Nebraska, western Iowa, not just Omaha, is scarred by this tragedy. A very disturbed 19-year-old man walks into this mall and this store and begins randomly shooting at people.

The victims of this terrible tragedy, this massacre: Gary Scharf, who was shopping, a resident of Lincoln, Nebraska; John McDonald, a customer, resident of Council Bluffs, Iowa. By the way, his daughter was an associate attorney for me. I have been communicating with her. To her, Suzanne Sheehan, and your family, my deepest condolences.

Also killed were six Von Maur employees: Angie Schuster, Maggie Webb, Janet Jorgenson, Diane Trent, Gary Joy, and Beverly Flynn, all of Omaha. Some of these were only 10 minutes from their shift being over and would be out of this store. Some of them are young mothers, leaving small children. There were others who were seriously injured, like Fred Wilson and Michelle Oldham. Others were also injured, like Jeff Schaffer and Brad Stafford.

Now just to put this in context, the first 911 call went out, and within 6 minutes our emergency response, our EMS, and our Omaha Police were in that store. But it was all done and over with by the time they could get there. The damage was already done. But they immediately began working on those that were injured and securing the mall for the other thousands of shoppers that were there.

I want to thank publicly our first responders from not only the city, but Douglas County, Sarpy County, the State Patrol, for their heroic efforts given in this tragedy. Now a tragedy of this scope and scale is just unthinkable. It's hard to get my mind around this. There's no way for us to understand this senseless act of violence, and I ask the entire country to pray for peace and healing during this difficult time for these families in our community.

God bless.

TRAGEDY IN OMAHA, NEBRASKA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, LEE TERRY, from the Second Congressional District, my neighbor. I, too, Mr. Speaker, want to extend my heartfelt sympathies to the families and friends of this senseless act of violence. Sometimes we are shocked by just how brutal the world can be and that came home to rest yesterday in Nebraska, where people, joyfully going about their holiday season, shopping, having time with loved ones, people wrapping gifts, all of a sudden being punctuated with this horrific act of violence that left eight people dead and in turn the perpetrator of the crime killed himself.

Mr. Speaker, Nebraska prides itself on being a wonderful place to live and to work and raise a family, and Omaha is truly a good community. I think if we have won consolation here, it will be that the community will pull together and will heal together.

On a personal note, as well, as Congressman TERRY mentioned, one of the victims of the tragedy was from my district and in fact had been a personal acquaintance and friend of mine, Gary Scharf. He was active in civic affairs. I knew he took great pride in the son that he had. I too wish to extend my deepest heartfelt sympathies to his family as well.